

T/SOR/6/1/4/1

Pupils in a class of their own—for making history



Free and easy at school . . . headmaster Brian Addison with Janet Gibson, Patricia McKell, Helen Lyle and Anne O'Donnell.

HISTORY is being made in a back-street church hall . . . where six pupils and a headmaster are pioneering Scotland's first free school.

The youngsters were until days ago unwilling pupils at state-run secondary schools.

Headmaster Brian Addison, 27, is a qualified teacher of technical subjects and taught at a Glasgow secondary school.

All quit the state system dissatisfied with what was being taught.

The pupils, from the city's Bridgeton district, are both Catholic and non-Catholic. They left with the backing and blessing of their parents.

REACTION

Mr Addison moved out of the mainstream of teaching after investigating the American free school system.

He interested the local tenants' association and parents in the system.

The reaction of local headmasters was less favourable.

While Barrowfield Community School, in a rent-free church hall, avoids the "free" tag, the aims are similar.

But Barrowfield, to avoid legal complications, stuck to a rigid school day of 9.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.

By **JOHN PIRIE**

**RECORD EDUCATION
CORRESPONDENT**

In a free school, pupils come and go as they please.

But the rest follows the free-school pattern.

There is no corporal punishment and no school uniforms.

Mr Addison runs the school but parents and pupils decide on policy—particularly the subjects to be taught.

Barrowfield's choice is limited at the moment to tidying the school and projects.

The first project is an investigation into the Barrowfield district.

But Mr Addison sees the school developing to about 30 or 40 pupils with three teachers.

He sees no difficulty in moving into Eng-

lish, Geography and History.

"Education is divided into too many different compartments," he said.

He can teach up to O-grade.

But he claims the free-and-easy approach at the school will provide more interesting and meaningful education.

The school is short of money.

EQUIP

Parents and pupils are involved in fundraising activities to equip the school and keep it running.

And Mr Addison has applied for registration as an independent school to the Scottish Education Department.